

WISDOM PSALMS

Key Verse: "But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law, he meditates day and night." Psalm 1:2

A. INTRODUCTION

In our previous session, we looked at the genres – Praise & Thanksgiving. Today we will be looking at another major genre called the Songs of God's Ways, known as the Wisdom Psalms.

It is not a specific category or term used within the Book of Psalms. However, some Psalms are commonly associated with the themes and proverbs which reveal God's ways, wisdom, understanding and Godly living. These psalms often contain valuable insights and lessons for living a wise and righteous life in accordance with God's guidance.

This session is written in the Bible Discovery style, so there is no Main Point, but the style allows each person to uncover the richness of the Psalm for themselves.

B. VIDEO RESOURCE

- [Psalm 1 by Bible Project \(5:38\)](#)

C. BACKGROUND TO THE GENRE

The Wisdom Psalms have a didactic nature and emphasise the Word of God as the fundamental source of blessing (Psalm 1:2-3, Joshua 1:7-8). In addition, they often contrast the lifestyle of the righteous with that of the wicked. Two rhetorical elements that dominate this genre are the blessing pronouncement and the use of metaphors (Psalm 1:3-4, 119:105).

These psalms also offer spiritual and practical insights into living a life of wisdom, seeking God's guidance, and acknowledging the importance of the Word of God as the foundation of God's blessing and protection. They continue to be a source of inspiration and reflection for individuals seeking to grow in God's way and live according to Godly principles.

Some psalms are divided in two genres, for example Psalm 19 is divided into two main sections: the first part (v's 1-6) focuses on the praise of God's revelation through nature (Praise Psalm) and the second part (v's 7-14) emphasises the significance of God's written Word (Wisdom Psalms).

Today, we will be looking at Psalm 1 to examine how this Psalm provide us an

understanding of Wisdom.

PSALM 1

1 Blessed is the man Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, Nor stands in the path of sinners, Nor sits in the seat of the scornful;

2 But his delight is in the law of the Lord, And in His law he meditates day and night.

3 He shall be like a tree Planted by the rivers of water, That brings forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever he does shall prosper.

4 The ungodly are not so, But are like the chaff which the wind drives away.

5 Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, Nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.

6 For the Lord knows the way of the righteous, But the way of the ungodly shall perish.

D. DISCOVER THE PSALM YOURSELF USING THESE FOUR QUESTIONS:

- 1. What do you see?**
- 2. What does this say about God?**
- 3. What does this say about us?**
- 4. What is God saying to you?**

Study Psalm 1 and answer questions in small groups of 3-4 people. Come together at the end for a brief discussion and summary.

1. LOOK/WHAT DO YOU SEE?

Read Psalm 1, and see which scriptures stand out to you or catch your attention?

2. WHAT DOES THIS SAY ABOUT GOD?

Read the passage once more. Discuss what this passage says about God or His plan.

Answer guide:

- *Psalm 1 does not explicitly mention God in terms of His characteristics or attributes. However, the psalm indirectly emphasizes the centrality of God's law and the importance of one's life with Him.*
- *The metaphor of the blessed person likened to a tree planted by streams of water which yields its fruit in season suggests God's plan is for us to have a life that is sustained and fruitful by our connection to Him as a life-giving source.*

3. WHAT DOES THIS SAY ABOUT PEOPLE (US)?

According to Psalm 1, discuss what this passage says about people (us)?

Answer guide:

- *The Psalmist emphasises the blessedness of a person come to those who avoid influences and guidance from those who promote ungodly, sinful, or morally questionable behaviour (v 1).*
- *The Psalmist described the blessed person are those who delight in God's law and continuous meditation on it day and night. It shows the didactic nature of the psalms where it intended primarily to teach and emphasise that delighting and meditating on the Word of God as fundamental for blessings and prosperity in our lives (v's 2-3).*

In Psalm 19:10-11, the Psalmist extols the value of God's Word likening it to precious gold and sweet honey. The Jews has a number of beautiful customs associated with Shavuot. According to Talmudic tradition, Shavuot is the day when the Ten Commandments were given on Mount Sinai.

Here is a description found in Sefer Harokeah (par 296) written by Rabbi Elazer of Worms (1160-1230) "It is written the custom of our ancestors that they bring children to learn (for the first time) on Shavuot since the Torah was given then. At sunrise on Shavuot, they bring the children, in keeping with the verse "as morning dawned (on Mount Sinai), there was thunder and lightning" (Ex. 19:16).

And one covers the children with cloak from their house to the synagogue or to the rabbi's house. And they bring the slate upon which is written alef, bet, gimel, dalet, tav, shin, resh, kuf... And the rabbi reads every letter of the alef-bet and the child repeats after him. And the rabbi puts a little honey on the slate and the child licks the honey from the letters with his tongue." When the child tasted the honey, it provides the picture to the child that the God's Word is sweet and satisfying to the soul something that you would delight in.

- *The Psalmist demonstrates a deep commitment and obedience to God's command and having God's law as the authoritative standard for our life: the compass we rely on for direction, the counsel we listen to for making wise decisions, and the benchmark we use for evaluating everything.*

In the early years of Billy Graham's ministry, he went through a time when he struggled with doubts about the accuracy and authority of the Bible. One moonlit night he dropped to his knees in tears and told God that, despite the confusing passages he didn't understand, from that point on he committed to completely trusting the Bible as the sole authority for his life and ministry. From that day forward, Billy's life was blessed with unusual power and effectiveness.

The most important decision we can make today is to settle this issue of what will be the ultimate authority for our life. Decides that regardless of culture, tradition, reason, or emotion, we chose the Bible as your final authority.

- *The Psalmist contrasts the destiny of the ways of the righteous with the ways of the wicked. The wicked are described as being like chaff that is easily blown away by the wind and will not stand in judgment. The psalm underscores the idea that those who follow the ways of the Lord will be blessed and protected, while those who do not will ultimately face destruction (v's 4-6).*

4. WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO YOU?

According to this Psalm, what am I doing well? What do I need to change? (Prompt: What's one thing about God that you want to remember more about and why?) How can I apply what God is saying to me in obedience and faith?

Answer guide:

- *Delight in the Law of the Lord and meditate on God's Word: Consider how much time you spend in meditation and studying the scriptures. You might want to incorporate more time in reading & thoughtful reflection on the Word for spiritual nourishment.*
- *Avoiding the path of the wicked: Consider if there are behaviours, attitude, or influences in your life that align more with the ways of the wicked. If so, contemplate ways to distance yourself from those negative influences.*
- *Choosing righteousness: Assess areas in your life where you can align your actions and decisions more closely with what you understand to be righteous and Godly.*

E. SUMMARY

The Facilitator wraps up the Session on Wisdom Psalms

Suggested summary:

- The following are fundamental for blessings and prosperity in our lives.
- The importance of choosing a righteous path, avoiding the influences of the wicked
 - We are to delight and extol God's Word not a duty to meditate on the Word of God.
- Examine yourself and consider what you need to change to be the blessed man as described in Psalm 1.

What are the challenges in our lives in making God's Word the ultimate authority for our life.

F. PRAYER

Craft a prayer as you pray as a group, try including at least one of the lines on the psalm in the prayers. (Suggested prayer below)

We pray for discernment. That we may not walk in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of the mockers. Instead, let our delight be in Your law and extolling the value of Your Word, likening it to precious gold and sweet honey meditating on it day and night.

Lord, we ask for Your guidance in all that we do. Make us fruitful in every season, may our lives bring glory to Your name. We thank You for the promise that You watch over the way of the righteous. Lord, help us to make Your Word the ultimate authority for our life regardless of culture, tradition, reason, or emotion, we will choose the Bible as our final authority.

APPENDIX I

PSALMS BY GENRE

Psalms are categorized by genre in the table below. To explore and expand your playlist of inspiring songs, consider selecting a psalm to include in your personal devotion. Use the following four questions to guide your reading and reflection on the Psalms:

1. **What do you see?**
2. **What does this say about God?**
3. **What does this say about us?**
4. **What is God saying to you?**

Praise & Thanksgiving			
8	75	113	139
18	92	114	145
30	100	116	146
33	103	117	147
34	104	118	148
40	105	124	149
65	106	135	150
66	107	136	
67	111	138	

Songs of Trust			
16	62	115	126
23	63	121	131
46	91	125	140
59			

Royal Psalms			
2	47	93	99
20	50	95	101
21	72	86	110
24	78	96	132
29	81	97	144
45	89	98	

Lamentation			
3	27	54	79
4	28	55	80
5	31	56	85
6	35	57	88
7	38	58	90
9	39	60	94
10	41	61	102
11	42	64	108
12	43	69	120
13	44	70	123
17	51	71	130
22	52	74	141
26	53	77	142
			143

Wisdom Psalms (God's Ways)			
1	25	49	127
14	32	73	128
15	36	112	133
19	37	119	

Other			
48	82	87	129
68	83	109	134
76	84	122	137